



MINUTES

OF THE PUBLIC MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, WALVIS BAY ON MONDAY 17 MARCH 2025 AT 18:00

Present: Councilors

Cllr Saara Mutondoka (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr Richard Hoaeb (Chairperson to MC)
Cllr Ronald Bramwell
Cllr Ryan Gordon
Cllr Albertina Nkoshi
Cllr Olivia Andrews
Cllr Paulus Kauhondamwa
Cllr Ephraim Shozi

Officials

Mrs. Victoria N Kapena
Mr. Theo Potgieter
Mr. Frans !Gonteb
Mr. Jack Manale
Mr. Henok Shikongo
Mr. Dries van den Heever
Mr. Jan Kruger
Mr. Joseph Amathilla
Mr Asser Tjikuniva
Ms. Anita Kahiva
Ms Krischka Stoffels
Mrs Lelani Coetzee
Ms. Shirley Tjaveondja

Others

Media: None
Members of the Public: 59

1. OPENING

The Deputy Mayor welcomed the community to the meeting. The Deputy asked one of the members present to open the meeting with a prayer. Cllr Bramwell made the official welcoming remarks and introduced the CEO to the public. The agenda was established based on the questions submitted by members of the public and it is a requirement as per the Local Authority Act.

2. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Cllr Trevino Forbes
Cllr Leroy Victor

3. DISCUSSIONS / FEEDBACK

CLEANLINESS IN CBD & REFUSE REMOVAL

Questions/comments from residents:

Mrs Meerna (Pensioner who has been in WB for 50 years) - Who is supervising the street sweepers and litter pickers.

Manager at Protea Hotel – how sure are we that we have 3000 bins in stock? At their resident, they had their three bins stolen in the past year.

Mr Victor Muller (resident for 30 years) – He thanked the Municipality for their efforts. They pay for a service and it shows as such on their statement. He would like to see the budget for these refuse removal trucks. The other issue is the looters that take bins from people's houses.

Mr Steven Pick – What is the time frame for the 5 trucks and implementation

Mrs Sharon – Observed a refuse truck with 12 employees. Why so many on one truck? Why did the municipality wait until all trucks were out of operation? Why is the Fleet Manager not being held accountable? The landfill site is not very conducive and user-friendly. What is the Council doing about making it more accessible to residents who want to drop off their garden refuse etc? This leads to an increase in dumping cases. The council is not doing anything about complaints submitted by residents.

Dinah (resident for 40 years) – If the Council is only buying the refuse trucks now, is it because there are no funds? And will this Impact the fees to the residents?

Mr Rautenbach – This issue started four years ago, then they voted and current seat holders are also not doing much. The fence (**which fence**) is not cleaned and it is supposed to be cleaned regularly. Sand is also a big problem. There are no ablution facilities in and around the town so people are just urinating and shitting everywhere. Lagoon is the central tourist attraction but it is not cleaned regularly. The parks are being used for all the wrong reasons, and they are not being cleaned. Businesses don't have fat traps and this is shocking as in the past this was not allowed at all.

4. . Feedback from CEO

4.1 Reassurance from CEO

- The CEO humbly requested the residents to give her time to work on the shortcomings in the Council, noting that there had been no CEO for almost four years.
- She assured the meeting that all these problems would eventually become a thing of the past.
- She emphasised that while solutions will not come overnight, they will be found.

4.2 Supervision Issues

- The CEO noted that the issue of supervision is a problem, but it has been addressed with colleagues.
- She stated that there has been significant improvement, though acknowledged that the institution can still do better.

4.3 Wheelie Bins Backlog and Distribution

- The CEO explained that the issue with wheelie bins is due to a backlog and a previous shortage.
- In November of the previous year, Council received 2000 bins, which were all distributed.
- At the beginning of the current year, another 3000 bins were delivered.
- Residents in need of a bin were encouraged to contact the Municipality with the relevant paperwork.
- She urged residents to follow the schedule on the WhatsApp channel and to only take out bins on the date their area is scheduled for collection.
- This is to avoid bins being stolen and refuse being littered by stray dogs.

4.4 Refuse Truck Fleet and Procurement

- The CEO stated that she could not answer the question regarding all five trucks being broken down.
- She confirmed that currently three trucks are subcontracted, and following a meeting held earlier in the day, this number would be increased to five trucks.
- Once the trucks in the garage are repaired, they will be added to the fleet to increase capacity and reduce overtime.
- The procurement of new trucks has been finalized, with the bid already awarded.
- The process is now in the stand-still period, and if no objections are received, delivery will be expected in five to six months.
- The delay is due to the need for amendments to meet Council's specific requirements.
- She also noted that internal processes are underway to address the maintenance of the trucks and what led to the current situation.

4.5 Illegal Dumping and Public Conduct

- The CEO acknowledged residents' frustration with illegal dumping but emphasized that shouting and insulting will not solve the problem.
- She encouraged all residents to act in a civil manner when engaging on these matters.

4.6 Truck Procurement Timing and Refuse Bins in Public Spaces

- Regarding the question on why Council is only procuring trucks now, the CEO stated that she cannot answer that, as she was not with the institution at the time.
- She acknowledged the concern that there are not enough refuse bins in the parks and confirmed that Council will look into increasing the number of bins in these areas.

5. Questions and comments from residents

Don't allow over-development as it will allow the town to collapse. The sewage is not an old problem but a big problem.

The current problems comes from 30 years ago. Procurement and HR is the problems in Council. People who are acting will never do the job properly as they will not take full accountability. Councilors need to be held accountable.

The sewage problem is coming from a long time. Because of the sewage, we have a fly problem in Walvis Bay. The Municipality has planners and they must do their work. Management, accountability, transparency.

Sharon – What does Council have in place if a contractor cannot finish a project? Because we are now here.

Residents are paying for the Municipality's failure. Has the Municipality ever thought of giving the residents rebates for all the problems they are going through?

Knowledge – when speaking about sewerage the Act is very clear on it. Why is the Council failing to do its job? Why is Council putting people's health at risk?

Michael – The Mayor has been saying that the Municipality has all the money. Can this money fix all these problems?

Rautenbach – In the olden days there were sign boards when a project is underway with all contact details of those involved etc. They not doing that anymore. Perhaps the engineers need to take everyone to all these pump stations and explain how it works. Flies are present because raw sewage is lying all over. The purified water is not even good for the gardens, yet residents are required to pay.

6. Feedback from CEO

Conduct During Meetings

- The CEO requested that discussions in meetings be conducted respectfully and should not deteriorate into insults.

Municipal Improvement Plan

- The CEO affirmed her commitment to fixing the Municipality and emphasized that she will do so.
- She stressed that she does not support rushed decision-making intended only to address short-term problems.
- She aims to follow the correct procedures, which may take time.

Reporting of Misconduct

- The CEO encouraged anyone with knowledge of underhanded dealings to report them directly to her.

Recruitment Updates

- Calls for improvement in vacancy recruitment was noted.
- The General Manager (GM) position was advertised; however, no suitable candidate was found.
- The CEO encouraged residents to motivate capable individuals to apply.
- The Procurement Manager is expected to assume duties in April 2025, which will enable the appointment of two to three subordinate staff and enhance operations.

Fly Infestation

- A fly problem was reported.
- Mr. Henok has taken note of the issue, and it will be addressed accordingly.

Project Funding and Infrastructure Challenges

- The CEO acknowledged that many projects, such as sewerage, roads, and housing, require capital that the Council currently lacks.
- A delay in a road rehabilitation project, in partnership with RFA and RA, was explained. The delay is due to a sewer line built in the middle of the road, which needs to be relocated before rehabilitation can proceed.
- Alternative repair methods are being explored, including options from Cape Town. Should this prove viable, a contractor from Cape Town will be appointed.

Contractor Evaluation and Procurement

- The CEO admitted that some past contractors were not ideal and have placed the Council in a difficult position.
- To mitigate this, the bid evaluation process has been improved to ensure better scrutiny of contractors.
- If necessary, the Council will consider direct procurement.

Contractor Signboards

- It was emphasised that contractors must display signboards when on-site.
- The community is encouraged to alert the Municipality if this requirement is not being met.

7. Feedback – Henok Shikongo

Pump stations' key activities – This information was available before the project commenced. Unfortunately, the contractor encountered problems, and it was unforeseen. We remain positive that the project will be executed and will be completed. In terms of how long it shall be before it is concluded, the Council foresees that the current contractor will be terminated in 6 months. Phases one however is complete. The pump station phase is in phase 2 and it will take 12 months from the date of commencement.

8. ROAD REHABILITATION & TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Ephraim – People who drive the trucks have supervisors, they must report. The traffic is giving residents tickets that their cars are not road-worthy, but the roads are not car-worthy. Due to the road deteriorating, the trucks are a menace to the town's roads. Secondly, residents need to regulate how they drive. There is no visibility of traffic management, and this is a major concern. The town does not have a Traffic Chief, and senior positions are vacant for too long.

Walvis Bay does not have a traffic department as far as residents are concerned. The senior citizens of this town do not get any consideration.

Sharon – As part of the resident's association, they have tried to assist with pothole repairs. Their proposal was well received but the next day, the Municipality started to fix the potholes in front of Spar and then it went silent.

Jacob – Roads are in a pathetic state. How are you going to work with delinquents? How will you hold them accountable?

George Shilongo – Citizens of WB for 29 years. It seems like there are politicians in the administration. There is some sabotage going on administratively. Council should put conditions in certain contracts especially when it comes to urgent road projects. Traffic Officers are not visible.

Roads are being constantly repaired but the repair work never lasts. There is a road that was repaired three times and only the 3rd contractor got it right.

Knowledge – Can the Council revisit the idea of creating internal capacity instead of always outsourcing, especially seeing that contractors are taking chances and wasting Council funds.

A proposal was submitted for the youth to put clamps on trucks, and this could be a revenue stream for the Council.

Roads are not going to be fixed while we have 30-ton trucks running up and down unless they are held accountable.

Ephraim – A Proposal made a few years ago If Namport does not want to help. The council should just give them one road to be responsible for. They must maintain that road. All the money is going to Namport and RFA. Swakop does not allow trucks in their town, why do we?

Trucks do pay for every km they drive on the road. Why are the Salt Company trucks allowed to have heavier loads and use residential roads?

Driving from Kuisebmond to town takes forever, is there no possibility of a railway road like in Narraville?

Feedback – Theo Potgieter

The money given by RFA is not in the Council Account. Initially, It was only 240 million, but when they came to consult they realized that the scope of work was way too much with the sewer line in that area being laid in the road. The amount increased to 400million.

Two potholes' contractors should be on site soon. This was delayed due to unforeseen circumstances. The Council has a massive backlog and not everything will be done in this financial year. The resealing project will commence soon. The internal pothole repair team is busy.

Namport will tell you that they paid their part. The problem is allocation of funds to the correct Local Authority. 5th Road and Nangolo Mbumba is under the 400 million project. For context, one intersection costs 1 million NAD.

Our own truck owners are also part of the problem.

Feedback – Jack Manale

Regarding the visibility of Traffic Officers, the Council is in need of more traffic Officers. When Traffic Officers write out tickets, the money does not go to the Municipality, it goes to the Central government.

Trucks are not allowed in residential areas. It is illegal. Issue of clamping the trucks, The Council can look into it.

The influx of trucks is something unheard of. Walvis Bay has been declared as the industrial hub. Council has allocated land to three companies for the construction of truck ports and they have been given deadlines to start within six months.

Feedback – CEO

We have enough vehicles in our traffic section.

Clamping is a great idea and the council should get a tariff gazetted accordingly.

. Several meetings have already taken place and a couple of disciplinary hearings are underway. It is not right for people to be paid and not deliver or provide the service to our residents.

9. ABANDONED RSA HOUSES

When staff from the South African government left for Windhoek, four houses were left unoccupied. Promises were made and it was advertised that they would be auctioned. These houses are to be declared as a health hazard and a court order should be issued. If this is done this will put pressure on the South African Government to act.

10. TRENCHES DUG BY INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

There is a process to follow, and a deposit is put down before trenches are dug. The department will follow up on this matter.

Reputable companies used to maintain the trucks and municipal fleets but started complaining that they were not receiving payment.

There was a leak in the park which was reported. The Meter was installed but the hole was not fixed, and it is still there.

Is there a register for all redundant staff/assets of the municipality?

Feedback – CEO

The council is currently busy with a list of items to be auctioned. That list will have an auctioneer, and it will be done in June/July 2025.

11. **BUDGET 2025/2026 (BASED ON NEEDS ASSESSMENT BY GMS. INPUT FROM RESIDENTS AT PUBLIC MEETING TO BE CONSIDERED)**

Erf 4060 – Schook is operating illegally on Erf 4059 (Dessert View Private School) in 5th Road / Nangolo Mbumba. School operations have been objected to by all three neighboring homeowners. What is town planning rights? The council will be held accountable for any accident that happens at this school.

No budget for Public Toilets in Town?

Questions and Comments from residents

INTRODUCTION OF NEW LEVIES

There should be a bylaw first before levies are introduced. The Shack levy is actually a penalty on every shack on an Erf.

No budget for the landfill site, especially skips at the Landfill.

No budget for Land Servicing and it is very concerning.

Fire Levy – Does this mean if there is a fire in town, these homeowners will still be expected to pay?

25 Peace officers but you don't hear anything of them issuing tickets.

When water was cut in March 2024, how much was generated during that month and why can the Municipality not continue cutting water when it exceeds a certain amount so the residents can get used to it?

Street vendors cannot be allowed to set up structures all over town.

12. Feedback from CEO

Fire Brigade Levy

- It was noted that a levy for the Fire Brigade is necessary to sustain the section, especially since it now operates on a 24/7 schedule.
- Walvis Bay is currently the only town not charging this levy.

Servicing of Plots

- The upcoming budget includes provisions for the servicing of plots in Narraville and Green Valley.
- This project is recognized as capital intensive.

Contractor Defaults and Land Reallocation

- Two contractors defaulted on their contracts.
- As a result, the land initially allocated to them has been returned to the Council for reallocation.

Skips at the Landfill Site

- It was reported that additional skips will be added at the landfill site.

Shack Levy Bylaw

- Bylaws are to be introduced regarding a shack levy.
- The purpose of the levy is to discourage residents from allowing building unapproved/illegal structures

Public Toilets in Town

- Council acknowledged the need for public toilets in town.
- The matter will be considered.

5 CLOSING

The meeting adjourned at 22h10.